

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-4 (canceled).

Claim 5 (currently amended): A packaging method of a hollow cathode sputtering target, comprising the steps of installing a cover of a size capable of covering a void of said hollow cathode sputtering target; providing one or more through-holes to said cover; placing a resin bag over said through-holes, and performing vacuum suction to the inside of said bag, said cover being rigid and formed from a flat plate capable of maintaining its shape after said step of performing vacuum suction.

Claim 6 (original): The packaging method of a hollow cathode sputtering target according to claim 5, wherein said cover is transparent resin.

Claims 7-8 (canceled).

Claim 9 (previously presented): A method according to claim 6, wherein said resin bag is impermeable to oxygen and moisture.

Claim 10 (canceled).

Claim 11 (previously presented): A method according to claim 5, wherein said resin bag is impermeable to oxygen and moisture.

Claims 12-16 (canceled).

Claim 17 (previously presented): A method according to claims 5, wherein the hollow cathode sputtering target is cup-shaped and has a rim defining an open mouth of a predetermined diameter, and a depth of the cup-shaped hollow cathode sputtering target is at least as great as the predetermined diameter.

Claim 18 (currently amended): A method according to claim 5, wherein the hollow cathode sputtering target is cup-shaped and has a rim defining an open mouth; ~~wherein the cover consists of a transparent, rigid, flat plate;~~ wherein the through-holes extend transversely through the flat plate; and wherein the flat plate is supported on and contacts only the rim of the cup-shaped hollow cathode sputtering target and does not extend below the rim.

Claim 19 (currently amended): A method of a packaging a sputtering target, comprising the steps of:

obtaining a hollow cathode sputtering target for packaging, the hollow cathode sputtering target being cup-shaped, defining a void therein, and having a rim defining an open mouth of a predetermined diameter, and a depth of the cup-shaped hollow cathode sputtering target being at least as great as the predetermined diameter;

installing a cover of a size capable of covering the void of the hollow cathode sputtering target, the cover consisting of a transparent, rigid, flat plate having one or more through-holes extending transversely through the flat plate, the flat plate being supported on and contacting only the rim of the cup-shaped hollow cathode sputtering target and not extending below the rim;

after said ~~installing~~ step of installing the cover, placing the hollow cathode sputtering target and cover inside a resin bag impermeable to oxygen and moisture, and

after said ~~plaeing~~ step of placing the hollow cathode sputtering target and cover inside the resin bag, performing vacuum suction to an inside of the bag.